

Link Letter No.5 March 2012

Tim is the Coordinator of the Enxet Old Testament Translation Team based at the Anglican Centre in Rio Verde, Paraguayan Chaco. He works alongside the translators Juan Martinez and Asuncion Rojas every day as they translate into the Enxet language and check completed drafts and keeps the Anglican Church of Paraguay, CMS and the United Bible Societies updated on progress.

Dear friends,

Greetings from Paraguay! The hottest part of the summer is now over, and the translators Juan Martinez and Asuncion Rojas are back in Rio Verde as CMS Latin Partners as from February 1.

I spent Christmas in the Chaco and as often in previous years, I joined Beryl and Ed and Marie Brice for a traditional Christmas lunch on the Tejano ranch where Beryl works. I then had a very quiet January spent mainly in Rio Verde, but managed to catch up on quite a bit of visiting, travelling to El Estribo, Makxawayá and Espinillo.

Many thanks to those of you who sent me Christmas cards and letters. Many arrived mid to late January, so I had an extended Christmas! One card from the UK arrived via the British Virgin Islands, in spite of being correctly addressed!

During December last year it was a great privilege to drive to

With colleagues travelling to take part in the centenary celebrations of the Wichi church



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Tim Curtis
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Paraguayan Chaco

Potrillo on the Pilcomayo River, near Ingeniero Juárez in northern Argentina, to take part in the centenary celebrations of the Wichi church. The Wichi church had been started by missionaries from Makxawayá back in 1911, and this caused amazement amongst my colleagues Juan Arce, David Gomez and Elvio Roque who accompanied me on the trip, as they were not aware of this fact!

At Potrillo we were given a very warm welcome by the local Wichi people and showered with gifts including beautiful string bags and belts with palo santo wood buckles. We were moved by the worship and music during the celebrations. During the music festival, what seemed like the entire town came out to watch. Members of other church denominations sang *Happy Birthday* to the Anglican Church.

It was good to see Bishop Nick Drayson and his wife Catherine after many years. Bishop Nick preached at the closing service, and impressed us with his command of the Wichi and Chorote languages. It was also a joy to meet up with David and Shelley Stokes, also Wichi speakers, and to see Wichi bible translator Isidro Vilte again. Isidro Vilte worked with Bob Lunt on the Wichi Bible, which was launched some years ago,

During our visit we met representatives of Toba, Chorote and other Wichi churches as well as musicians from these churches. After the closing service we all sat down to a meal of barbecued meat, roast chicken and rice, followed by large

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water melons. Later there was time for a short excursion to see the great Pilcomayo River, which marks the border between Paraguay and Argentina.

The day before we returned to Paraguay we drove to Juarez where we visited the Spanish speaking Anglican church. We stayed with Rene and Marina Pereira who regaled us with pizzas and excellent hospitality. My colleagues from Makxawaya returned to Paraguay greatly encouraged and refreshed by the experience. At events such as these one gets a sense of God's tremendous faithfulness over the years as we remember what God has done, and what He has promised.

During January Enxet Bible translators Juan and Asuncion had a well-earned rest. I did not take a holiday this summer, but took the opportunity to do some visiting around the Chaco. There were several visits to Makxawaya and El Estribo, and one to Espinillo with colleagues from Sombrero Piri. I also visited Liberato Cabañas, the former health auxiliary at Palo Blanco and Enxet church member, who lives just a few miles from Rio Verde, and who went blind several years ago. I and a colleague spent some time in prayer with him.

At the end of February I shall be taking Juan Arce, who has been treated for epilepsy since July last year, to see the neurologist at the Mennonite hospital in Loma Plata. He had several tests done last year at the hospital, and it is time for further check-ups. Juan was fine on the trip to Argentina with no seizures.

■ I would value your prayers for Juan, his wife Miriam, and their four year old daughter Nilda. Juan is a great help to pastors Juan Sosa and Romualdo Rojas in Makxawaya.

■ Pray also for the translation team in Rio Verde as we turn our attention to checking Numbers and 2 Chronicles during the first months of this year. Give thanks for the progress made with the checking last year and for the continuing contacts with Enxet churches throughout the Chaco.

■ Give thanks for the opportunity we had to visit the Wichi church in Argentina, and for the encouragement it has given me and my colleagues from Makxawaya.

With all prayers and best wishes

Tim



Top: With Isidro Vilte
Middle: With Makxawaya children outside church
Bottom: Rafael and Juan - Rafael was a Wichi friend who Juan met in Argentina



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